

EDITORIAL NOTES.

Quite recently an American paper came to hand in which there was a long article setting forth the reasons why, in the opinion of very many people, Theodore Roosevelt should accept the presidential post for a third term of four years. It may not be known to all the readers of the *Nur Afshan* that the only thing that stands in the way of any worthy man's being President of the U. S. A. longer than eight years, i.e. two terms, is the example of George Washington, who refused to serve a third term because he believed it contrary to the principles of true democracy for any chief executive to hold office so long. There is nothing in the Constitution of the U. S. A. to prevent a man's serving for as many terms as the people choose to elect him; but the decision of the "Father of his country" has been so often quoted and his example so often followed that this time-honoured precedent has become almost as binding as a law. Many excellent and able men have occupied this high office, but hitherto no one has appeared whom the people were so loath to give up as to force him to act contrary to the unwritten rule forbidding a third term. It is a striking commentary then, on the character of President Roosevelt's administration, that many people are now heard saying: "He must consent to serve. We cannot do without him." Truly it seems as if we had here an exception to the proverbial statement: "A prophet has no honour in his own country." But far more important than that is the truth that no man can be given the leadership, he must take it. When one appears who has the qualities of real leadership in him, there is never any question as to his right to carry his followers with him. President Roosevelt may not think it wise to accept the office for a third term, but whether as President or as a plain citizen of the U. S. A. he can never in any sense be a common man.

In connection with this, we venture to repeat a statement made some time ago in one of our issues that the President of the U. S. A. is a true "servant." It has been an ever growing pleasure to get letters from America during the past year, on account of the reports they bring of a new, healthy moral tone distinctly observable in that land, and due in large measure to the tireless efforts of its Chief Executive. It is not a mere passive inoffensiveness that is advocated by the White House these days. President Roosevelt stands for aggression upon all territory occupied by the powers of evil; and people, who used to think it inconsistent with the liberty of a republican country for a man to insist upon his neighbours doing right, are now coming to understand that there is nothing that so

fulfil the original intention of the founders of that great nation as just this very determination to see personally to it that the laws are obeyed, and, if there be any field not yet covered by appropriate legislation, that those necessary laws are made as soon as possible.

It is not hard to see what will be the outcome of all this if only the grain of perseverance be added to that of vigour, and enthusiastic inception. America will no longer be the resort of the criminal classes and those incapacitated by lives of vice for anything but a parasitic existence upon their more virtuous, but alas! too lenient, brothers. God grant that the day may come soon when every land whose people profess Christianity may become a harbour of refuge for the needy, but as repellent to the wilfully wicked as the like pairs of twin magnets.

NOTHING IS LOST.

There perishes not one
Of all things we have done,
Though oft we see success by failures crowned;

Though in our vision, all
Endeavours seem to fall
Into forgetfulness—they are not lost.

Some of our smallest deeds
Are scattered far, like seeds
By east and west winds, or by storm winds torn.

Labours of hand and brain
We deem performed in vain—
Beyond our reach may be—they are not lost.

Some seeds are sown by night,
Some struggle to the light,
To die at budding time by touch of frost.

The weak do but deny,
To fertilize the clay
On which the strong take root—they are not lost.

Though other hands than ours
May gather in the flowers
That we have watched and tended at each cost.

Though other lips may taste
Our fruits, there is no waste;
It is God's law that naught of his be lost.

—DEATHWORM S. PRALL.

There are just two centers in the universe—self and God. One's thoughts, purposes, desires, aspirations, and endeavours are sure to have their direction toward one or the other of these centers. Every person lives for God, or lives for self; and his life is a success or failure accordingly. If a man lives for self, he is not likely to prove a blessing to himself; and he certainly is no more likely to prove a blessing to others. If he lives for God, his life will reach, in its outgoings, all those who are between himself and God; and so he will prove a blessing to others.

—*Sunday School Times.*

CALAMITIES AND THE PROVIDENCE OF GOD.

BY REV. GEORGE E. DARLEY.

The world is startled by great disasters, which of late years have been many. The earthquakes at Kangra, India, and in the province of Calabria, Italy; the eruptions of Vesuvius; the colliery explosion at Courrières, France; the famine in Japan; the revolution in Russia; the Baltimore fire, and the San Francisco horror, together with numerous railroad wrecks, cause us to ask the question if the providence of God is the same as ever, and is there good to come out of seeming loss and evil? The calamities of the earth and the providence of God are a study in world economies and salvation which have often puzzled the wisest and most considered. The problem is discussed in the Book of Job, and the conclusion reached is: "So the Lord blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning." In the time of Christ the connection between providence and disaster was not clear, and men ascribed violent death to great sin, and quick judgment to rampant iniquity. The idea has not yet departed from our midst that misfortune can always be traced to sin. French Catholic papers claimed that the mine explosion at Courrières was due to a separation of Church and State. There was no connection whatever between the snapping asunder of the bonds that had joined Church and State and the disaster at the mine; but there is a close connection between the wars that have come upon France in her civil life and the programme enacted by the Romish Church for the control of the State.

Does the earth abound in disasters, and do fire, famine and water bring thousands to their death and destroy millions of dollars' worth of property? These things are not indications of the wrath of God, and seldom do they come as judgments on the people. Those overcome are not sinners above the rest of mankind. There is the greater truth that God's ways in the final destruction of iniquity are to be known, and that none shall escape his justice. Calamities and the providence of God are not irreconcilable. It takes both to give a view of his righteous judgments and ways of mercy. Three distinctions are to be made: First, we must distinguish a calamity that comes upon the wicked as a judgment of God; second, a trial that overtakes the righteous, which is not a judgment upon them, and does not turn them from God, but draws them nearer to him and makes them stronger and better; third, the forces of nature, which are always for the best, though disaster be the outcome.

All the earth is very good, and while we are to improve it and use its forces, we can not improve upon its making and directing. Indeed, one little corner of it is beyond our grasp; one blade of grass defies all the intelligence and acumen of a thousand years of science, and four thousand

years of philosophy. It behooves us, therefore, to approach with reverence all the works of God, and to stand in awe of him and his art.

Calamities have come upon the earth by the use of physical forces, and God's swift judgments have fallen like a thunderbolt out of a clear sky. The Antediluvian World became evil in the imaginations of its thoughts and heart. The foundations of the great deep were opened, and the floods gave down the rain upon the world was submerged. A righteous man and his family were saved, and did not meet doom with the wicked. Parts of the earth have been cursed because of sin. It was said of the fertile valley of the Euphrates in the region of Babylon: "I will make it a possession for the bittern, and pools of water, and I will sweep it with the besom of destruction, and the Lord of Hosts." Pompeii and Herculaneum were buried in lava by Vesuvius; and along with their culture and art went their patriotism and moral depravity. Peoples are overtaken by the judgments of God because of their unrighteous ways. Western civilization owes much to Roman law and Greek culture; but far more to Celtic virtue and manhood; that is why the Anglo-Saxon race is a Celt. God has chastened us by war and commotion that we learn his righteous purposes for a nation; and if we do not heed his warnings, we may fall to the rear in the march of nations, and the great American Eagle look like a turkey buzzard. God is no respecter of persons or peoples, and his judgments for sin come upon all alike.

The righteous are not free from trial; but their tribulations have not made them curse God. The Christian Church has passed through terrible ordeals, but has had more joy than the worldling, and greater victories than the unbeliever. "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice and be exceeding glad; for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you." But God has not said that a man who is suffering for his sins and being judged for his iniquities comes under the head of a persecuted saint. Law works wrath in him, and he may go into eternity reviling God instead of being saved in Jesus Christ. Coston has said: "Times of general calamity and confusion have ever been productive of the greatest blessings. The parent ore is produced from the hottest furnace, and the brightest thunderbolt is shafted from the darkest storm." We must ever distinguish between a disaster and a judgment. Heavy judgment is a disaster to the wicked, but not all disasters are judgments. The calamity of San Francisco ought to make that city better in every way, though it is no more ruined than the rest of our great cities. Its people will rally. Living as we do in a commercial age and therefore partly materialistic, we have within us also great spiritual



forces, and men are realizing that wealth is not all, for it may be swept away in an instant; therefore we seek to further eternal interests and make our civilization one of righteousness.

The just and unjust have the rain and sunshine. The righteous and wicked are swept down together when there are upheavals in nature. We often feel that a man killed while breaking the Sabbath came to his death because of his sin. But thousands will go on Sabbath excursions and expect a good time; while some saint of God may be killed bright and early Monday morning by a switch engine before he gets a chance to hear the train. This should not lead any to Sabbath breaking, for the judgments of God will come upon each. Whether a Christian is lost on a Monday train, or an unbeliever on a Sabbath one, there is the further truth that should sink into heart and life: "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."

There are forces in nature which prove sublime at times, and yet are ordained for the good of the earth. Fire burns, water overflows, and the pent-up powers within the earth break loose. But the "Earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein. For he hath founded it upon the seas and established it upon the floods." The sea roars and is troubled, yet it is the medium of traffic between the nations. We love all the good things it yields to us. God has established the earth in the midst of silent, irresistible forces wonderful to contemplate. The earth is a garden. The deserts have their wisdom; the rivers, forests, fields, dunes, mountains and flowers have a blessing for man. Never be like the dear old sister who thought the minister ought to be greeted with a long ben and a tale of woe. Deserts were her specialty. She was always wondering what the people of Western Kansas had done to bring drought. One day it was explained to her, that before there was a white man on an Indian or even a buffalo on these Western plains, the hot winds blew, and even hotter than in her day; that fifty years before her time this Western plain land was known as "The Great American Desert," but that now it was being reclaimed, and made the home of man, and that God had no special grudge against it or those who now lived on it, in happy homes and surrounded by fine crops. Prosperities divide us, calamities unite us. In the midst of our disasters and the forces of nature that are always good we are to live righteously before God.

Alamosa, Col.

When a young man—or young woman, for that matter—looks out upon life and says: "How much is there in it for me?" you may be sure that the great purpose of life has become obscured. Not, "How much can I get out of it?" but "How much can I put into it?" should be the controlling motive of life.

—Sel.

HOW SMALL BIRDS MAKE LONG JOURNEYS.

It has often been asked how small and weak birds manage to fly such enormous distances when migrating. As a rule, however, says an exchange, small birds that have come very far across the sea have not flown, but have been blown over during violent gales, and many of them arrive on land in a half dead condition.

In fair weather small birds make long journeys successfully over considerable tracts of ocean, but the reason is that they are carried on the backs of the larger ones. When passing an autumn in Ocoté a writer asserts that he distinctly heard the twittering of small birds when flocks of sand cranes were passing overhead on their way to southern shores. On another occasion, when firing a gun, he saw three small birds rise from the flock and disappear again among the cranes. A native priest named him that they come over from Europe with them, while it has been found that small birds, never before seen in certain parts, have been brought thither at times of migration.

Another cause is that small birds do not make their journeys in one flight. They generally rest during the day, searching for food, and thus proceed to their destination by easy stages.

STEP BY STEP.

By REV. WILLIAM ALFRED GAY, D.D.

From day to day, from hour to hour,
I walked as willed Omnipotent Power;
And whether pace were fast or slow,
O'er mountains high or billows low,
This thought within me seemed to glow,
I journey step by step.

A treadmill round my present seems;
My life, a maze of mystic dreams;
'Till I can grasp the regal thought
Which Mind Divine to me hath brought
That, whether I be sought or sought,
I journey step by step.

I face the future, and I ask,
"Which is my way, and which my task?"
And I am filled with doubt and fear,
So great the duties, and so near,
Until this message I have heard,
"You journey step by step!"

—

"HE KNOWETH OUR FRAME."

I once met a mother walking with a little crippled boy, whose frail limbs were covered with steel braces up to his thighs. He was hobbling along in a pitiable way, but his mother was encouraging him at every step.

"That's good! why, you're doing splendidly!" she would say, and then the poor little one would try so hard to do still better than he had done; not to show off, but just to please his mother. Presently he said:

"Mama, watch me! I'm going to run."

"Very well, darling. Let me see you run," said his mother, in a most encouraging tone. Some mothers would have said:

"You'd better not try it, or you'll break your neck!"

I watched almost as eagerly as his mother to see how he would do. He took two or three steps that did pretty well, and then he caught one foot against the braces on his other leg, and would have fallen headlong over the curb, but his mother caught him, and put him back on his feet again. Then she stroked his hair, kissed his pale cheek and said:

"That was fine! That was splendid! You can do better next time!"

Just so our heavenly Father often does with us, when we stumble in our hobbling efforts to please him. The little boy's performance was perfect in the eyes of his mother, for she knew only too well the weakness of his frame. In a similar way can the weakest of us fully please God.

—ELIZABETH P. BROWN in the *Herald*.

Somebody did a golden deed;
Somebody proved a friend in need;
Somebody sang a beautiful song;
Somebody smiled the whole day long;
Somebody thought, "To sweet to live";
Somebody said, "I'm glad to give";
Somebody fought a gallant fight;
Somebody lived to shield the right.

Was that Somebody YOU?

If you do not do all you can, how can you prove yourself a Christian?

—McCHRYER.

DIVING FOR SALT IN DEAD SEA.

The awful desolation of the Dead Sea, which lies nearly 1,300 feet below the level of the Mediterranean, is broken here and there by the salt driers, whose work is probably as useless as the human race itself.

From remotest antiquity the salt of the Dead Sea has been collected and brought to the Jerusalem market, where it is used for curing hides and for domestic purposes. Dead Sea water contains over 25 per cent of solid substance, of which 7 per cent is chloride of sodium, or common salt.

The Dead Sea contains no living creature. Sea fish put into its waters speedily die. Not a single boat navigates its strange water, nor is there any sign of life, save the isolated parties of salt driers, who scrape and slowly amass their glittering heaps of crystal near the mouth of the Jordan.

When a sufficient cargo is made ready a long string of camels crosses the desert, and the salt is loaded up into packers, or "skewies," and taken into Jerusalem, where it finds a ready market.

Salt, as is well known, has been used as currency from time immemorial, just as bricks of tea are used to-day in Central Asia, especially in the borderland of China and Siberia.—*Technical World Magazine*.

MUSLIN.

To-day is essentially the reign of all kinds of muslin, and there is not one among us who does not recognize its value in dress or decoration. But who did we derive its name?

Muslin is so called from having first been manufactured at Mosul, or Moussel, a town in Turkish Asia. It was afterward made in India and imported into England about 1600. About twenty years after it was manufactured in France and England, and now, as we are well aware, there are endless varieties of the original fabric, many of which rival in beauty the most beautiful kinds hailing from India.—*Exchange*.

SOME OF CHINA'S CHRISTIANS.

By REV. WALLACE S. FAIRB.

During a recent trip to the western part of Shanling province my heart was greatly cheered when I met some of God's children whom I had not seen before. Yes, I had seen one of them. An entire stranger to the Gospel story, she came to Ichowfu four years ago to have a slight operation performed. I made her acquaintance then. During her convalescence she was daily instructed by a Bible woman, and it was then that she received her first impulse



toward Christianity. Returning home, she continued to study the Catechism and Bible, and finally gave her heart to the Lord. In the course of time Rev. J. H. Laughlin visited her village and baptized her. The moment she believed, she began to exhort members of her own family to leave their "heathen practices" and follow this "new doctrine." After that she turned her attention to distant connections and to her neighbors. And today in her neighborhood there are seventy Christians, practically all of whom owe the beginning of their interest in Christianity to her. Besides these, are there upwards of a hundred who are now claimed as inquirers, most of whom will in time probably become members of the church. And these, too, look to this woman as their spiritual mother. Such is the present result of the work of Mrs. Wang. She seems to have out-Andrewed Andrew.

Soon after our arrival at the village of Mrs. Wang, she brought to her three mothers, all Christians; there were her own mother, her mother-in-law and her "adopted mother" (a characteristic Chinese relationship). The men of the family were all dead. These women did little else than try to bring others to their way of life.

We spent Sabbath with the Christians of that village. The chapel, a part of Mrs. F. Wang's ancestral property, was crowded at the various services. There was an intelligence manifest in the faces of the auditors, and a cleanliness in their personal appearance that spoke volumes for their position in life. Among them were some of the leading men and women of the community. The hope of China of which we often hear—does it not lie in such people as these? Oh, for more Mrs. Wangs!

Iskows.

YOU WILL NEVER BE SORRY

For doing your level best.
For being kind to the poor.
For hearing before judging.
For thinking before speaking.
For standing by your principles.
For stopping your ears to gossip.
For being generous to an enemy.
For being courteous to all.
For asking pardon when in error.
For being honest in business dealings.
For giving an unfortunate person a lift.
For punctilious in keeping your promises.
For putting the best meaning on the acts of others.

—Sunday-school Advocate.

*If all the skies were shaking,
Our faces would be pale
To feel once more upon them
The cooling splash of rain.
If all the world were waste,
Our hearts would often long
For one sweet strain of solemn
To break the endless song.
If life were always merry
Our souls would seek relief
And rest from weary laughter
In the quiet arms of grief.*

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